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☞ Until October 1st, correspondents may address us more directly, as follows: "L. C. Baker, Princeton, N. J."

A GREAT NEED CONFESSED.

One of the most honored names in the Presbyterian Church is that of Henry Boynton Smith, for many years Professor of Theology at Union Seminary, New York. In a recent number of the *Evangelist* the Rev. M. R. Vincent, D. D., quotes from an unpublished paper of Professor Smith, found since his death, the following remarkable statement:

"What Reformed Theology has got to do is to Christianize predestination and decrees, regeneration and sanctification, the doctrine of the Church, and the whole of eschatology."

Professor Smith has been quoted, we believe, by both sides in the present controversy over Revision. It would be impossible to frame a stronger plea for the movement than the above words contain. They assert that the Church has so far failed to understand and to set forth these most important features of the Christian faith that her theology in these respects needs to be "Christianized." And as for the attempt we have been making in this magazine in the special field of eschatology, there could

be no stronger justification of it. Just think of it! One of the most revered teachers of theology in the Presbyterian Church declared twenty years ago, a short time before his death, that the *whole of its eschatology* needed to be Christianized!

And yet the first man who professedly set about this work, and in a way that the Presbytery itself confessed to be sincere, was invited to step down and out!

But let us look a little at this arraignment of the "Reformed Theology" by one of its most able and devout professors. We shall not go at length into the first two points of his indictment, inasmuch as it has been our special calling to labor to supply the deficiency charged in the third point.

1. Dr. Smith acknowledges a grave defect in his Church's doctrine of predestination and decrees. He is bold enough to say that the doctrine needs something yet to make it Christian. This defect we have found to be that the doctrine makes the purpose of God's electing love to terminate upon the subjects of it, with no ultimate purpose of blessing toward the non-elect. The Scripture doctrine of election is that the "first fruits of God's creatures," begotten "of His own will" (Jas. i, 18), relates to a future general harvest; that "the Church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. xii, 23) implies that there are later born, toward whom the first-born sustain a priestly and redemptive relation. If God now chooses an elect company from either the Jews or the Gentiles, it is in obedience to His ultimate purpose to "have mercy upon all." Such is the plain teaching of that part of Scripture in which this mystery is the most

fully discussed (Rom. ix–xi). It was in the faith of this wideness in God's mercy and this breadth in His gracious plan that Isaac blessed *both* Jacob and Esau concerning things to come (Heb. xi, 20).

Nothing more is required in order to Christianize the Reformed doctrine of the decrees than to admit these plain statements of Scripture; yea, even if the whole of its eschatology must needs be disrupted to make room for them.

2. The defect in the Reformed doctrine of "regeneration and sanctification," to which Dr. Smith next refers, is not so glaring as in the other instances. And yet a vitiated doctrine of decrees and of eschatology must impart a taint to the whole of any system of theology of which it forms a part. In this case an enormously exaggerated view of future punishment has engendered a distorted view of the atonement. The saving work of Christ has come to be regarded rather as a rescue from the penalty of sin than from its power. The work of Christ *for* man has been put in the place of the work of Christ *in* man. The true definition of salvation is that given by Paul in Titus iii, 5: "According to His mercy He saved us through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost which He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that being justified by His grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Justification cannot be separated from the inward washing by which a man is made just. And yet in theory, and still worse in practice, gospel hearers have come to regard it as something that can be achieved for them without its being wrought in them. And hence many of them grow sadly indifferent to the love and practice of good works.

3. But the point of Reformed Theology at which the most sweeping change is needed, according to Professor Smith, is "the whole of eschatology." The whole of it, he tells us, needs to be Christianized. This is an honest confession. Whatever it now is, whether pagan or what not, it is not Christian. It certainly is not Jewish, for it could not by any possibility be drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures. The Jews seem to have contracted some features of it from their heathen captors while in Persia and Babylon. Certain phrases current among the Jews were adopted by our Saviour in His instructions, and so are found in the New Testament. But out of these there has been built up a doctrine of Divine retribution which contradicts the whole spirit of our Lord's life and teaching, and to which His apostles give no sanction. Hence Dr. Smith is perfectly right when he brands it as non-Christian.

How, then, shall we proceed to Christianize eschatology, or the Church's doctrine of the last things?

Our own effort in this direction began with the discovery that she had been betrayed into a fatal misconception as to the place and meaning of resurrection in the Divine economy. The Presbyterian Confession makes no distinction between the divine and inmost self in man, which cannot die, and the soul or person of man which is destructible, but which it declares to be immortal. It misunderstands therefore the meaning of the Divine sentence "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Hence it misconceives the meaning of resurrection, which loses in its system its true character of recovery from death through the rehabilitation in body and soul of the un-

housed spirit of man. It is forced, therefore, into a virtual denial of the first principle of the gospel of Christ in that it strips the resurrection, achieved by His redeeming work, of all value to the race except in the case of the elect. To the rest of mankind, instead of bringing any blessing, it becomes the most appalling calamity, an infinite curse. The countless generations of past ages, who have gone down to death under the judgments of God for sin, are thus not only shut out from all benefits of Christ's triumph over death, they are confirmed by it in everlasting and unspeakable misery.

With this radical mistake as to the meaning of this primary fact and hope of the gospel, it is not surprising that the "whole of Presbyterian eschatology," as an explication of the purposes of God toward mankind, is more barbaric than can be found in any of the chief systems of paganism. Its only rival is Mohammedanism. No wonder that one of the first theologians in the Church pronounced it unchristian. Just listen, for example, to these statements of what befalls the wicked after resurrection and after the previous torment of their souls in hell-fire. They shall "be cast into eternal torments." They shall suffer "most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission in hell-fire forever." They shall be "cast into hell, to be punished with unspeakable torments both of body and soul, with the devil and his angels forever." This is the end, we are told, for which God has provided to raise the countless myriads of unjust men, who have gone down to death and hades for their sins, from the dead! It is that their bodies also may feel His vengeance to all eternity. As if there could be such a thing

possible in God's universe as a sinful *body* endowed with immortality, or a sinful *soul* that could escape the sentence "The soul that sinneth, it shall die!" And as if the very provision made by God to preserve the spirit of man through this wreck of body and soul by a resurrection from the dead were devised to perpetuate the endless existence in eternal torment of that which, by the very law of its being, must be adjudged to death!

Surely it is easy to see at what point the Reformed Church must begin to Christianize its eschatology. It must sit down again at the feet of Jesus, and of prophets and apostles, to learn anew the meaning of the first doctrine of the Christian faith—the resurrection of the dead.

And lest she should be deterred from this by the fear that she must sacrifice her hold upon men through the dread of future punishment, and that she would thereby prove unfaithful to the teaching of Scripture about retribution, let her reflect how easily and naturally all this Scripture falls into its proper place under the category of death as the wages of sin. All the Lord's words about hell and an impending destruction of the wicked in eternal fire relate to man in his present personal embodiment, as under bondage to sin and corruption in this present world system. From this bondage he can escape only as Christ shall set him free, and so escaping he shall save his soul from death. But these words were never intended to exclude the "hope toward God" which is conveyed to all men, even the unjust (Acts xxiv, 15), in the provision to raise them from the dead. That their resurrection is not to the same rank and priority of life with that of the saints is manifest. Wicked men must be held in death's prison-house until they have

"paid the uttermost farthing." Their personality—body and soul—may have been so yielded to sin that in this destruction by death they may "lose themselves and be cast away." Their resurrection must be not only one "of judgment," but so searching that even the "self" of their former evil personality with all its life treasures may be destroyed in God's consuming fire. Their resurrection cannot, of course, be "in the image of the heavenly" manhood, and must, therefore, be to another bondage in "the image of the earthy." There is ample room here for all the several teachings of Scripture concerning the doom of the ungodly. It is seen that their "end is destruction." And yet we are able to hold fast the gospel truth and hope that resurrection is God's way of taking up again in grace the case of lost man, which sin and death seemed to make forever hopeless. The sentence of the law is executed in his death, so that this presents no obstacle. For beyond sin's wages, and after the law has exacted of man double for all his sins, the grace and power of God come in to take up again his case through a resurrection from the dead.

Whether, however, we are yet prepared to reconcile and adjust all the problems that may be raised by these various sides of Scripture teaching, we are certainly right in the principle with which we start out—that God's provision in Christ to raise the dead of mankind is a boon to all the race, even the unjust. To deny this is to deny the first truth of the gospel. And the Reformed Church will go on repeating its shilly-shally attempts to soften or to conceal the hard features of its pagan eschatology until it acknowledges this principle. All attempts to Christianize it

will be useless that do not begin here. One would think that for very shame, after confessing through the mouth of such men as Professors Smith and Schaff, and many others of its distinguished leaders, that its eschatology is all astray, it would begin to take up this work in some radical way.

And yet the shame of the Presbyterian Church in this matter is to this day perpetuated and intensified by the fact that, in taking up Revision, she has left the whole of her unchristian eschatology untouched.

May God speed the day when some powerful voice shall arouse her from this shameful lethargy, this fatal indifference to the very truth with which she claims to have been put in trust!

THE PROBLEM.

The problem of eschatology is this: Given two lines of Scripture teaching that appear to be contradictory, how are they to be harmonized?

One line of Scripture teaching affirms that sin leads to destruction, that the wicked must be forever destroyed from God's presence, and assumes that this life and death issue must be decided during this present life.

Another class of passages teach that God is love, that He will not keep His anger forever, that His mercy endureth forever, that He hath shut up all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all, that the devil and all his works are to be destroyed, that death and hell are to be cast into the lake of fire, that the last enemy, death,

is to be abolished, that all things are to be reconciled unto God, and He shall be all in all.

Various attempts have been made to solve this problem, the latest being to take advantage of the element of uncertainty in the language of Scripture due to the fallible human element that enters into its structure. On this account it is claimed that the decision of this question must rest largely upon the Christian consciousness.

Those, however, who stand by the text of Scripture as the fixed arbiter in the case divide themselves into three principal divisions in their solution.

1. The traditional and dogmatic party insist that man as to his soul or person is immortal, and that, if he fails of salvation in this life, he must exist forever in endless misery.

2. A large and increasingly influential party deny that man is by nature an immortal existence, and maintain that it is contrary to the whole logic of the plan of creation and redemption as set forth in Scripture to suppose that immortality can pertain to anything or any one except as the creature partakes of the divine nature of the Creator. They affirm, therefore, that only those who receive power through Christ to become the sons of God have everlasting life, and that all other men perish and are destroyed forever.

3. A third class affirm with equal confidence that all who died in Adam are to be made alive in Christ, and that through His "much more" abounding grace all wandering prodigals shall, after adequate suffering, find their way back to the Father's house.

To most minds these divers solutions have seemed

irreconcilable, and each party therefore brands the solution of the other as heresy.

To do this, however, they are compelled to overlook and even to deny the truth for which each stands.

Fundamentally, the whole question must be determined by the answer given to this question—What is the true nature of man? The answer we propose, as furnishing a solution that does not sacrifice anything that is true in these three partial attempts, is that man, as to the *essence* of his being, is immortal, but as to his *existence* and present personality, is mortal and may, yea, *must*, be destroyed, except so far as he yields his person a living sacrifice to God. Man, in *essence*, therefore, is of a divine nature, and this determines that he must finally be personalized in God's image. But man, as he *exists*, may be a most unworthy vessel to contain that nature, and hence, as to his person, he becomes a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction.

This principle opens up to us the true meaning of resurrection, in which, as the radical fact of the gospel, there is contained the key to all Scripture mysteries. The first of the three parties above referred to is driven, by its illogical assumption that man, as a sinful being, exists forever, to infer that the purpose of his resurrection is to restore to him complete existence in body and soul, in order to complete his being as a subject of eternal torment. Such a view of resurrection is unscriptural and absurd. The second of these parties also denies that there can be any gracious or redemptive feature in the restoration of this class from death, and explains their resurrection as in order to the completion of their punishment in death. A

section of this party of conditionalists, however, perceiving the incongruity of this view of resurrection as a mere prelude to another death, deny that resurrection, which they are compelled to regard as a provision of grace, awaits the wicked at all.

The Universalists, while they are more consistent in affirming that resurrection must be redemptive, yet fail to distinguish between the deliverance of the *essential* man and the *existent* man. Their doctrine implies that the personal man, as now existent, is the subject of salvation. Whereas, the truth is that the deliverance of the essential or divine nature in man for further experiment and progress toward the goal of perfect manhood requires the *destruction* of the man as now personally existent, except so far as the personal traits and treasures of his present existence may be appropriated and transformed by the Spirit of God. Hence Jesus taught His disciples that every one of their offending members must be lopped off, if the whole body were to be saved from being cast into hell. He taught also that the life or "soul" which is to be saved must first be lost. To this teaching is conformed that of Paul, who constantly insists that the old or natural man must be crucified in order that out of its death the new man may be raised. While, therefore, it is true that man is in essence a child of God, and must, therefore, finally bear His image, it is far from being true that his existing personality must necessarily be saved and fitted up into a temple for that image. His *personality* will be saved for this purpose just so far as it is surrendered to God for this high use. So far as it finds the end of its existence within the narrow limits of self, so far it must be destroyed.

Again, therefore, we affirm, as an essential principle of the new eschatology that *personal continuity of being goes with character*, and that, while man, as a child of God, must live forever, man, as now personally manifested, must be destroyed, except as he takes on the true image of God. And the constant teaching of Scripture as to the purpose of God to destroy the wicked from before him, requires us to believe that their existent manhood may be so pervaded by evil that its destruction may carry with it the whole of their former selves. Such personalities become vessels of wrath, fit only for destruction. But then the divine essence contained in the vessel cannot be destroyed. It must be gathered up and put into another vessel until it obtain one fit for its use.

This is the meaning of the provision to restore even the unjust from the dead. Their resurrection can be only one of judgment—inasmuch as it necessarily rejects that which was proved to be only fitted for death. And it must still confine the spirit of man within that sphere of judgment and discipline in which alone the offspring of God can be trained for their high destiny. But still resurrection is vindicated as being essentially an intervention of God's grace. It takes up again the case of even the man who "loses himself and is cast away."

Thus all three of the above solutions are seen to be partial, and yet true in part. The orthodox may hold on to the idea of an eternal punishment which is an eternal stripping of the man of the prerogatives and treasures of his present personal existence. The conditionalist may justly hold that this destruction is so radical as to carry with it the very soul and self of the man as now existent,

while the Universalist may hold that the deeper, the inmost self of man being divine, cannot be destroyed, but must be rehabilitated in another form of existence, along which it may pursue its path toward its final goal of divine manhood. But at the same time it is shown where he must needs correct and guard his doctrine against the perversion of this hope of the gospel, for it enables him to still warn the wicked that, if they persist in their wickedness, they cannot save their souls alive in the day of consuming fire when the fabric of every man's life must be tried of what sort it is.

NOTHING KNOWN.

Professor Max Müller, in the "Gifford Lectures on Anthropological Religion," after showing that the religious sentiment among all nations furnishes strong proof that the soul survives the death of the body, argues further that as to the *where* and the *how* of this future existence, we are wholly ignorant. He says:

First of all came the question, *where* do the souls of the departed exist? All the answers returned are equally natural, all are equally unobjectionable, but likewise equally not proven because they are beyond the reach of proof. The best answer was perhaps that contained in the most ancient Greek language and mythology, that the souls had gone to the house of the *Invisible*, of *Aides*. No one has ever said anything truer. The house of the Invisible was placed, as we saw, either beneath the earth, or beyond the earth in the west, in the land of the setting sun; while others who looked upon heaven as the abode

of the gods, placed the souls of the departed in the same abode.

With regard to these fond hopes and imaginations, all we can say is that they may be true, that they may all be fulfilled, but that we are no better off than the Vedic poets or the lowest of savages for pronouncing a definite opinion.

So, also, with regard to the *how* of the soul's future existence: after reciting the various notions that have prevailed, including "the more philosophical theory that by a succession of new births the soul would assume new bodies, having thus an opportunity given it for rising to higher and higher perfection, and reaching in the end the supreme goal," he says, "that, however convinced of the soul's eternal existence, we shall always remain ignorant as to how it existed."

Professor Müller expresses further the opinion that a belief in immortality does not appear on the surface of the Old Testament; only in hidden germs, and that it is in the New Testament that life and immortality are brought to light.

Upon this subject of the *where* and the *how* of the soul's future, we have to say:

1. That the scientific study of man gives us here no light.

2. The comparative study of religions as Professor Müller tells us, yields nothing definite.

3. The Old Testament makes no positive statements; it gives only hints.

4. The New Testament gives the first explicit teaching, but it is explicit only in respect to the nature and the employments of the future life of a special class of men

whom it calls "saints." It presents the first instance of a man who was known to be alive after death, who was seen by and who conversed with other men, and who has reached the true goal of manhood as the representative of God, and the inheritor of His estate. It affirms that this "Son of Man" imparts to other sons the power to triumph over death and to become the sons of God. As to the place of their abode, it is said to be a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." It is "with Christ," as a sharer in His priesthood toward humanity, and in His dominion over God's works.

But with regard to the future existence of the mass of mankind who are not saints, neither the Old or New Testament give us anything but hints.

What are those hints?

It has been assumed that the New Testament gives us something much plainer than hints; that we have there positive descriptions. From the words of Jesus concerning hell, a doctrine has been drawn of the future existence of these souls in a place prepared for their torment, and that into this pit of fire are to be cast their bodies, hereafter to be raised and united to their souls, and that there the whole restored man will be punished with unspeakable torments forever.

A closer examination of these passages, however, shows that they teach no such monstrous doctrine. Instead of describing what befalls unjust men after their resurrection from the dead, they relate to a destruction to be visited upon them as *now* existent. The members to be mortified were their present members, and the "whole body" in danger of being cast into hell was the embodied

personality of the men to whom the words were spoken. They were not addressed as subjects of a future resurrection, but as men in flesh and blood exposed to a present danger. So that these words, rightly interpreted, give us no clue to the *where* and the *how* of the future being of this class.

The few passages which declare their resurrection give us more of a clue, but then we ask, what, after all, is that resurrection which is not one "of life," but "of judgment"? We must find some clue more radical, more pervasive, more applicable to the whole of Scripture than these passages afford.

Certainly no clue to this mystery is so satisfactory as that furnished by the uniform Scripture teaching concerning the organic unity of the race. One who has learned to read the Old Testament aright discovers that the life, the being, and destiny of the generations who have gone down to death are preserved and carried on to completion in the living. There is no salvation for the dead which does not reach them through the virtues and triumphs of those who come after them. What is called the plan of redemption is all based upon this principle. A chosen seed, of which Christ is the Head, become the channel of life and blessing to "all the families of the earth." It is through them that sinful lives are to be purified from the dross of evil, that the dead are to be restored to life.

It is of course impossible for us to know *how* the vanished lives of the sinful dead are grafted into those of the living in order that they may be preserved from extinction and finally perfected. This view sheds light rather

upon the *where* of their future being than the *how*. We have only skimmed as yet the surface of this mystery of man's being. We have not begun to sound all its depths and heights. Man is the microcosm of the universe, and the atomic depths in his own nature beneath are as unmeasurable as are the starry heights he scales. It is within these heights and depths that lie concealed the mysteries of heaven and of hell. As united to God, he is one with the Maker of heaven and of earth. Those of the human race who have become one with Him in His eternal life are the builders of that new and heavenly manhood in which God shall make His tabernacle forever. These risen saints are now at work in and among men, in ways unknown to us, building this temple of humanity for God. This makes the heaven to which they have gone near to us, around us and within us. And the hades in which the sinful dead are retained as captives is also concealed in these human depths. The lower strata of every man's being is made up of materials which these dead wrought out in their lives. And here they find their lurking places after they are gone. In the acknowledgment of this mystery in the constitution of humanity lies the coming reconciliation between Science and Religion. The unbelief and the agnosticism of science in regard to a future life for man will lose the ground which now furnishes their excuse, when it is found that the perpetuation of the race through a seed that treasures up the progress of the past carries with it the conservation of the individual lives that have contributed to that progress, while the general beneficence that pervades the whole realm of life and provides for its progress will afford pre-

sumptive proof, even to science, that the Christian doctrine that these imperfect lives are to be hereafter restored and perfected by means of a selected and perfected seed is true.

And so also will the Scripture doctrine of retribution appear to be both true and scientific. For this view presupposes that behind all evanescent *forms* of life there is an ideal perfect type that is seeking to perfectly express itself. It can carry on, therefore, to this goal of perfect expression only those features of the individual lives behind it which are suited to its end and are worth preserving. The personal traits, therefore, and even the identity of each human personage in this chain of progress can be retained, only so far as they are capable of being wrought into the final and immortal structure. All else must be burnt up in the eternal fire which destroys from the presence of the Lord whatever is unfit for His abode.

The chief reason therefore why so little is known of the where and the how of the future of the unjust dead is to be found in the fact that we have regarded the spirits of the dead as severed by death from the mass of humanity now living. The plan of redemption is based upon the fact that a connection between these two portions of the race is still preserved. The place of the dead is not lost in the great human organism. Both heaven and hell are therefore much nearer to us than we have imagined. It is therefore in the more complete knowledge of man himself, and of the constitution of the human race, that the key will be found which opens all these mysteries.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF ST. PAUL.

We have been much interested in reading the recently-published work of the Rev. A. Sabatier, Professor of Protestant Theology in Paris, upon *The Apostle Paul*, in which he sketches with great skill the development of the apostle's doctrine as drawn from the study of his life and writings. The book is a fine example of the higher criticism, in that, while it freely applies its methods to the examination of that portion of the literature of the New Testament, it leaves us with a higher, as well as more intelligent view of the great apostle, and of the inspiration by which he was guided in his life and labors as the servant of Jesus Christ.

It is interesting to note to what conclusion this author and critic arrives concerning St. Paul's eschatology. He says:

When Paul declares that death itself shall be abolished forever, it seems to imply that evil will actually cease to exist. The apostle says nothing of the final fate reserved for the wicked, or the devil. But the idea of an eternal damnation evidently lies outside the logic of his doctrine, which would rather require the absolute annihilation of wicked beings. It is particularly to be observed that Paul makes no reference to any resurrection of the wicked. Not having the principle of life in themselves, they cannot live again.

The author in this last remark overlooks one important passage (Acts xxiv, 15), in which Paul avows before Felix his "hope toward God" (in which his accusers also shared), "that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the

unjust." Professor Sabatier has the discernment to perceive that in the apostle's view resurrection is necessarily a redemption to life, and, therefore, that, if the wicked were to be again raised to life, this would imply their ultimate restoration. He is right in this conclusion, but he is clearly wrong when, in order to support the opposite alternative of their annihilation, he suppresses the one positive declaration of Paul that the unjust shall be raised.

Moreover, in his comment upon Rom. xi and other passages from the apostle's writings he admits that the kingdom of God must finally "embrace all humanity." His own logic, as well as the apostle's logic, requires him to hope for such an universal salvation. That Paul supposed that this grand result of Christ's redemption could be achieved only through the annihilation of the immense portion of mankind known as "the wicked" is not for a moment to be entertained.

What Professor Sabatier and the large class of devout and hopeful students whom he represents need to perfect their doctrine is to accept the full consequences of the principle that resurrection is redemptive, and that "in Christ all shall be made alive," and then to make room for all the retributive teaching of Scripture under that principle. He will learn that there is a distinction to be made between the salvation through resurrection of the *essential* man and of the *personal* man; that the essential man, as from God, cannot be "annihilated," and must finally attain to perfect personal expression in the image of God, while the present personality, so far as it is an unworthy expression of that image, must be destroyed. This was

Paul's view of salvation as applicable to all men, whether saint or sinner. The saint was saved only as he yielded his carnal and natural man to death, that through the alembic of death and resurrection it might be transformed into the spiritual man. In this surrender and through this transformation he saved "himself." His present personality was thus made to furnish the materials which were to be wrought over into the structure of that perfect manhood in which he would be manifested at his resurrection from the dead. In the case of the ungodly there would be the same destruction of the old man in God's consuming fire, but inasmuch as the personality of the man had been identified with this body of sin, and had not been surrendered to the transforming power of the Spirit of God, it must be destroyed with it. Resurrection therefore could only restore such a man to another opportunity in the flesh to build up another structure in personal manhood more suited to the original thought of God in creating man in His own image. Such resurrection involves of necessity further judgment and suffering in the flesh, and such break in the continuity of personal identity as would fully justify the apostle's words as applied to the persons of wicked men—"Whose end is destruction."

It is in this way that we are to find reconciliation between Paul's evident hope that even the unjust dead are included in the great sweep of God's redeeming grace, and his assertion that they shall be forever destroyed from His presence.

PERSONALITY IMPLIES LIMITATION.

It will be remembered that we have uniformly applied the term "personality" to man, not as he *is*, of a nature divine in his inmost being, but as he *exists* in outward manifestation. The inquiry here arises, if man at the root and ground of his being is of God, why does not his personality inevitably assume a form suited to that nature, and properly expressive of it?

The answer is that man, as made in the image of God, is yet in process of creation. We read of only one man who has, as yet, reached the goal of perfect personal embodiment of God. In the "Son of Man who is in heaven," and who is "the image of the invisible God," we discover the final thought of God in the creation of man, which is that the fullness of the divine nature shall dwell in him bodily. In the end, therefore, the personality of man shall correspond to this true idea of his being. His complete personal manhood shall become the fit and eternal dwelling-place of God.

But during the progress to this supreme goal the divine nature chooses to manifest itself in imperfect and transitory forms which are preparatory to, and more or less prophetic of the final form. It proceeds by steps through all the lower stages of created life, in order that it may carry "the creature" along with it to this high goal (Rom. viii, 22–24). When it thus humbles itself to creature conditions, it of necessity becomes subject to all the limitations and defects which those conditions impose. Even the gross forms of animal life below man must be explained

on this principle. All life is from God, but it is made subject to this yoke of corruption and vanity in hope of its final deliverance from the yoke "into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God." And this especially explains the forms of gross and sensuous humanity with which the world is filled. These are all in various stages of progress toward the final goal. There is a divine nature in them, but it is hindered and delayed in its manifestation by the conditions which its subjection to the yoke of the creature imposes. The law of its progress requires that these forms be discarded as unfit. Here comes in all the Scripture teaching concerning retribution. And here is the foundation for our teaching that this destruction of the *existence* of sinful men, while it cannot carry with it the destruction of the divine nature in them, must carry with it the loss of their personality, so far as the *existent* man is not conformed to the *essential* man. Here there is left room for all Scripture warnings to men against losing themselves in this pit of destruction, and for all its exhibitions of the grace and power of God as now operative through Jesus Christ to save men from this perdition. Salvation in Christ is not only the deliverance of the essential man from the limitations that obstruct his progress to perfect personal expression—it is the rescue and renovation of our present personality, so that it may become such a fit expression. Otherwise it must be lost with its accumulated treasures. And this is why its salvation must be through a process of death and resurrection. As the sentence of the law against it on account of sin is death, it must be "crucified with Christ"—that is, it must be laid upon the altar of sacrifice and service in complete

self-surrender to God. This surrender indeed requires that it finally be yielded up in death into His hands, confident that "He who wrought in Christ and raised Him from the dead" will also renew and transfigure our personality into the same form of glorified manhood.

But the effects of this transforming process are not all postponed until after the death of the body. They begin here and now, and manifest themselves in us just so far as we "bear about in our bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in us."

SPIRITUALISM.

The phenomena of spiritualism, so far as they are genuine, may be explained by the principle that in the organism of the human race the unjust dead are preserved in being through connection with the living. Spiritualists themselves admit that only the spirits of the imperfect dead lurk among these earthly scenes, and seek to communicate with the living. It is plain also that the phenomena of these apparitions are mainly subjective—that is, they are connected with the mental states and impressions of those who witness them.

This is the fundamental question in the inquiry about spiritualism. Are these alleged phenomena objective to the persons who witness them, or are they produced within the region of their own personality? We believe the latter to be true, but we cannot therefore pronounce them to be mere imaginings. Scripture bears too constant witness to the fact that spirits do operate and speak through

men, to admit this explanation. (See *e. g.* I Tim. iv, 1, 2, Rev. Vers.) But the doctrine that the human race is an organism explains both sides of this subject. It shows that these experiences may be subjective, and yet not unreal. That which the spiritist observes is due to the operation of his own mental powers, but it is not therefore of necessity illusive. The dead, who speak through him, or an impression of whose forms become visible to him, are really connected with his own existence and are thus able to influence his mental conditions. Such influence is a load from the past, which every man must more or less carry during his earthly discipline. But it is the Christian's prerogative to keep all such influences under check and restraint of the Divine Spirit within him, and so to preserve the spirit of moderation and of a sound mind.*

It is important that Christianity should concede whatever of truth may be involved in this fundamental fact in Scripture of the solidarity of the human race, living and dead, for nowhere else can she find any scientific basis for her doctrine of a future life. Science knows of no future life for men, except as their existence is continued in the life of the race to which they belong. We have been blind to the fact that it is just here that Scripture originally places its hope of a future existence for man, and that its redemptive scheme for his restoration operates strictly within

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* A writer in a recent number of the *Free Christian* well remarks, "We must not overlook the deeply significant fact that, while Christ gave to His apostles power over unclean spirits to *cast them out*, we never once read of their *invoking* any spirit, good or evil."

these limits. Only Christianity goes further than science in revealing that not only is the generic life of the race thus preserved, but the being of the dead remains embosomed within that life, and that the Divine power and love which lie behind the whole scheme of nature are operative for their redemption and perfection.

In the camp of reconstruction a working opinion is no doubt harder to form, and demands more of the individual than is the case in the camp of tradition. Nevertheless, it is within the reach of everybody who seeks it with some conscience and earnestness.—*Selected.*

NOTES ON CURRENT TOPICS.

An English Clergyman's Views.—At the recent Grindelwald Conference on Christian Union, the Rev. W. Hay Aitken, whom we recall as an English clergyman who conducted a "mission" a few years ago in New York city, spoke as follows upon the differing views concerning future punishment:

Some believed in an infinite amount of suffering in the world of retribution; others believed the suffering would not be infinite but indefinite. Referring to his personal belief, Mr. Aitken said the doctrine of Life in Christ, or "Conditional Immortality," had so worked itself into the tissue of his theology as to give a new meaning and a new reality to the terms and phrases with which, as an evangelist, he was most familiar. But whatever their views on the mysterious subject of retribution might be, all would surely agree in exclaiming with the patriarch Abraham, "Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?" With man's limited knowledge they could not pretend to say what God would do, but he would boldly affirm that men might safely follow Abraham's example in affirming that there are some things that God will not do; and to Him, personally, it was plain that the Judge of all the world would

not inflict an infinite punishment for a finite sin; nor reward the faults and failures of a couple of decades with the unutterable agonies of protracted torture through æons, beside which the geological record of this planet, vast as it is, must seem but as a "watch in the night."

Honest Investigation.—Prof. T. J. Dodd, of Nashville, Tenn., in *The Old and New Testament Student*, in a plea for a more thorough study of the Bible in the original texts, says:

There should be more honest investigation in the schools for the discovery of what is really the *truth of God*, as distinguished from formulated creeds or other prevailing interpretations of the same. The theological plummet should be removed from the lecture-room, and it should be the aim of professors to teach not *what* the students are to believe, but *how* they are to believe concerning the oracles of God and their teachings. The study of the original texts merely for the purpose of establishing ourselves more securely in previously formed beliefs—rejecting such new light as may not easily blend with that already shed upon the sacred page—is unworthy the spirit of the profound lover of the truth, and is to-day one of the most prolific sources of the semi-infidel disposition of large numbers of our most intelligent men.

If theological schools are established for the purpose of propagating creeds as distinct from the unbiased teachings of the Word of God, the sooner we dispense with them altogether the better. Or let us candidly announce that Augustine, Turretin, Calvin, Arminius, Wesley, or the Pope is our standard of sacred truth.

Is there in the country a seminary where the *pure Word* of God is preached, and where the great fundamental principles of Protestantism are consistently applied in its interpretation?

The Organic.—Prof. W. J. Tucker, of Andover, in a recent address before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at Harvard University, struck the same key-note with ourselves, in the way in which he characterizes one of those great movements of humanity in the midst of which we now are, and which make themselves powerfully felt in Church and State. He says:

The fact which I now wish to emphasize is this: that the great constructing force which we are taking over from the results of physical science, and which we are trying to apply to the current problems of humanity, is the *sense of the organic*, which, as we transfer it to things human, becomes the *consciousness of a vital*

unity. Man has found a new place for himself in the physical world, with new partnerships, alliances, affinities. By the same method and under the same impulse he is now beginning to discover and realize new relationships to himself, each man to every other man, the individual to the whole. It is this sense of the organic, the inheritance of the last results of thought, and now permeating all our thinking, which is giving us the new conception of humanity, which, as I have said, is virtually giving us a new humanity. It marks the movement from liberty to unity.

FAITH.—In a recent sermon the Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D., says: "Faith is faith in God, not in a creed. Faith is faith in Christ, not in a Westminster divine. Faith is faith in the life revealed in the Bible, not in the teaching of the nineteenth century concerning the teaching of the sixteenth century about the Bible. I indict this spirit of traditionalism because it engenders the spirit of hypocrisy; because it demands that men shall believe; because it throws them from the pulpit and the Church if they do not believe; because it bids them believe that they believe; because it offers to them creeds and symbols and signs to believe, though those creeds and symbols do not exactly represent their belief; because it asks them to say words in a double sense. The result in the community is that men have almost come to believe that the minister does not preach what he thinks, but what it is proper to believe, or what he thinks it proper to believe, or what his people think it proper for him to believe."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A correspondent, who is a Presbyterian minister, and a valued friend, writes:

I have looked for and read with interest your explanation of the atonement. That this is a deep subject there can be no question, and it is probably impossible for any human mind to grasp all the fullness of its meaning as it lies in the mind of Jehovah, much more to set it forth exhaustively in human language. I wish I could now find the number of the *Herald and Presbyter*, of a few months back, in which a paragraph quoted what I thought was your language, to the effect that the cross is not a device to take

the place of character; the comment being that "this is exactly true," but that in the cross is found the only way for the formation of right character. I think the vicarious substitutionary element of Christ's sacrifice is not set aside by the resultant effects of the cross in the hearts and lives of believers. As the central truth of Christianity, it may be viewed from many differentstandpoints, each of which presents its own aspects, and all true.

We certainly sympathize with this brother in what he says about this subject as being many-sided and inexhaustible, and also with his view of the relation of the cross to the formation of right character. If there was anything that we made emphatic, when privileged to preach the gospel, it was this. And we have never since written a line with the intention of denying or disparaging this truth.

Nor would we deny that there is a "vicarious and substitutionary element in Christ's sacrifice"; we have only sought to free this feature of His work from misrepresentation, and especially to guard our readers against a common perversion of it, namely, that Christ died to save us from the judgment due to us for our sins, rather than to save us *in* and *through* required judgment. It makes a vast difference—not merely in theory, but in its effects upon conduct and life—whether we regard Him as a victim suffering penalty *instead* of us, under a legal system which required Him to endure the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, or whether we view Him as freely and lovingly uniting Himself with us in our own nature in order that He might take part *with* us under its burden of sin and penalty and bear it, not instead of us, but with us and for us, and by His divine strength and purity deliver us out from under it and set us free. In the latter case it is seen that God's forgiveness does not exempt me from the penalty which His righteous law imposes for my wrong-doing, and which, because His law is perfect, can never be set aside. But He forgives by imparting to me the strength and righteousness of His divine-human nature, which has power to inwardly cleanse from all sin, and He converts the very penalties I must needs submit to, even that of death, into the instruments of this cleansing. They serve to kill out the old man and to clear the way for the formation in me of the new man which after God is created in

righteousness and true holiness. This gospel, therefore, gives no encouragement in the delusion that I may go on in sin, negligent and self-indulgent, and finally escape the consequences by a full amnesty and act of pardon on the ground of a righteousness wrought for me by another and imputed to my account. I need to know, and all men need to know, that if I do wrong I must suffer the consequences, and that surer than the motions of the stars is the unerring law, "Be sure your sin will find you out," and "He will render to every man according to his work."

The Christian, however, instead of setting himself against this law and hoping to escape from it, at once submits to it and accepts the just judgments of God against him under it, even to the surrender to death of this old man of sin, which deserves to die, and out of whose death and judgment alone he can rise to newness of life. He thus judges himself that he may not be condemned with the world, and to the extent to which he thus humbles himself under the mighty hand of God he will in due time be exalted.

This question of the nature of the atonement seems to us to rest just here—upon the purpose of the death of Christ. Is the cross a divine method to free man from the just consequences of sin, or from sin itself, and so to bring him into a condition of moral excellence in which penalty is no longer necessary? The first view is met by the unanswerable objection that, under the government of God, there can be no penalties which are not perfectly just and wise, and therefore it could be neither wise nor just to set them aside. Men therefore must be saved, not from these proper penalties, but through them and beyond them. A supreme evidence of this is that God's way of saving man from *death*, the wages of sin, is not to remit this just sentence, but to execute it, and after its execution to provide for him a recovery out of and beyond death. The very perversion of the gospel, which it is the mission of this magazine to expose, would never have arisen had men been taught to believe that they cannot possibly escape the payment of sin's wages, and that God's grace provides to deliver man not from his well-deserved death, but out of and beyond it, through a resurrection from the dead. The prayer of Jesus, who gave Himself to

death for us, was not that He might be saved from death but *out of* it. (See Greek of Heb. v, 7.) Thus the substitution of eternal torment for death as the penalty of sin, and the consequent monstrous perversion of the purpose of God in resurrection, stand connected with a false view of the atonement as a governmental device to free men from the just consequences of sin, rather than as a provision to take up the case of lost man after the infliction of its penalty and to cleanse and restore him through and by means of it.

RE-INCARNATION.

This same correspondent writes also in reference to another point in our teaching as follows:

I confess that your theory of the resurrection of the unjust through re-incarnation has somewhat staggered me, but have noted that you do not advance it dogmatically but admit that there is no definite positive proof of it in Scripture. At the same time, for one who accepts the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, I cannot see that your suggestion of re-incarnation should be utterly incredible. As a mystery it does not compare with that greatest of all mysteries. It seems to me to fit in well with the theory of resurrection you have set forth, as always and essentially redemptive.

We are grateful for the moderate way in which our friend passes judgment upon this question. It is true that we do not enforce this doctrine as a dogma or as plainly taught in Scripture. It has for us grown to be an opinion because it adapts itself so well to a doctrine we are sure about, namely, the redemptive nature of resurrection. It seems evident

1. That resurrection is the restoration to life in manhood of one who was dead.

2. The two possible forms of the type of embodied being, called man, of which Scripture speaks, are the heavenly and the earthy. The Risen Christ is the pattern of the first; Adam, or the man in flesh and blood, is the pattern of the second.

3. Only a select and limited class of men are prepared to rise out of this earthly life to the condition of the heavenly,—only those in whom Christ is now formed as the hope of this glory.

4. All other men, "the unjust," can be restored through resur-

rection only to the lower or earthy plane of manhood. On this plane they may, through further judgment in the flesh, learn to live according to God in the spirit.

5. Such resurrection, whether to a life on this earth or on some other planet, is re-incarnation.

6. The laws which govern the development of life on the earth, the principle of heredity, the links which bind one generation with another, and the facts of the science of life in general, together with the teachings of Scripture in accordance with these facts, and especially its repeated promises to some existing generation which can be made good to them only as represented and repeated in their descendants, all make it probable that past generations are introduced to life again on the earth and through the eclipse of a rebirth in infancy, and that, in punishment of past sins, they thus "lose themselves," only to find themselves again when the plane of the higher and heavenly manhood is reached on which all things are restored.

7. The mysteries of life and death and resurrection, of judgment, and of heaven and hell are thus brought much closer to us than we have hitherto imagined. The mystery of the interlocking and intertwining of human lives, the one in the many and the many in the one, is explained. So also is the fact that one can bear the sins of another, and suffer penalties and win rewards for those who have gone before them. This mystery of re-incarnation may include, not merely the repetition of a single former life in some other one, but many such lives may be gathered up and represented in another, who may work out for them deliverance or help them forward toward it.

This opinion about re-incarnation as the mode of resurrection for further discipline and trial of the unjust is not, however, a *necessary* feature of the doctrine of redemptive resurrection. If any prefer to believe that this renewed trial in embodied life takes place in some future age of the earth, or even on some other earth, this does not at all affect the principle for which we have all along been contending, that resurrection lies at the other pole of the divine dealing from death, the wages of sin, and that it is therefore benignant and redemptive.